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Sale of radios by branches of the Polish Radio in 1948 and 1949

1. In the 2-year period from 1948 to 1949, the Polish Radio embarked on a program of distributing radios throughout the country. After 2 years, this program was entirely abandoned, and efforts were concentrated exclusively on broadcasting with wired loudspeakers. The sale of radios to the people began at the end of 1948. At that time, the Polish Radio imported the larger number of radios from Czechoslovakia (Tesla-Rytmus, 4-tube, U-series tubes); some were received from Germany as reparations, mainly the Philips brand. The rest were of domestic production - Pionier and Aga - the latter made in Dzierzoniow and Warsaw. Because of the great demand for radios, the Polish Radio organized special sections, called Commercial Sections, in its regional managements, to handle the sale of radios. The Commercial Sections handled the sale of radios, radio tubes, "opony" (loudspeaker diaphragms?), and later also the repair of radios.
2. At first, radios were sold to all citizens, provided that there were any to be sold. Usually, the demand for radios, despite the high prices, was greater than the supply. The Commercial Sections also organized installment buying over periods ranging from three months to ten months, which also contributed to the large demand for radios. In 1949, the cost of Tesla-Rytmus radios was 16,000 zlotys, Philips-Philette 21,000 zlotys, and Aga (domestic) 36,000 zlotys.
3. In 1950, prices for radios increased; for example, the domestic Aga radio was 42,000 zlotys. On 1 January 1950, the Commercial Sections, after operating for one and a half years, were liquidated. Evidently, the distribution of radios was not achieving the goals expected by the regime. On orders from the central authorities of the Polish Radio, radio sets were sold after mid-1949 only upon the recommendation of the WK's (Wojewodzkie Komitety, Provincial Committees) of the Communist Party, usually to UB (Urzed Bezpieczestwa, Security) functionaries. Furthermore, the Commercial Sections, toward the end of their operation, imported 2-phase Tesla-Rytmus radios from Czechoslovakia which were not equipped for short wave reception, so that the BBC and the Voice of America broadcasts could not be heard. After liquidation of the Commercial Sections, the remaining stocks were sold to social clubs and trade unions.

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4. Since then, the sale of radios to the people has been handled by the CIME (Centrala Handlowa Przemyslu Elektrotechnicznego, Central Marketing Office of the Electrical Industry), a state commercial enterprise. The only radios that remained on the market were the two-phase Tesla and the three-phase Aga and Pionier, the prices of which increased 20 to 30 percent. Installment buying, which previously enabled the majority of the people to buy radios, was discontinued.
5. At present, the shortage of radio parts on the market is constantly becoming more acute. This shortage is purposely engineered by the regime's policy to gradually eliminate "free listeners" of radios, and to substitute loudspeakers wired to radio relay stations.
6. After 1 January 1950, the DNO (Dzial Naprawy Odbiornikow, Radio Repair Section), a part of the Commercial Section, was incorporated into the newly-created PPRK (Panstwowe Przedsiębiorstwo Radiofonizacji Kraju, State Enterprise for the Radiofication of Poland). Other sections were completely liquidated. The former DNO became the SOR (Stacja Obslugi Radioodbiernikow, Radio Service Station). The SOR has since, almost exclusively, been repairing the radio relay stations, public address assemblies, club rooms, etc. As a rule, there is a "shortage of materials and parts" for a private radio owner, except on recommendation of the Party or through other "influence".

✓ General technical information on the Polish Radio broadcasting station in Wroclaw

7. The present transmitter of the Wroclaw radio station has a power of 50 kilowatts. It was installed in the fall of 1948 in a former German radio station located in Zorawin, a village 15 kilometers south of Wroclaw. The transmitter was purchased in the spring of 1948 from RCA in the USA for 130,000 dollars. The transmitter, an air-cooled type, was one of the latest American models at that time.
8. The transmitter was installed at the radio station in Zorawin within the 3-month period from July through September 1948. The installation work was done by a special crew of technicians and engineers, numbering approximately 20 persons, from the Chief Management in Warsaw. Boleslaw Fafars (non-Party), a skilled young engineer, born in 1918, and technical director at the Wroclaw broadcasting station, supervised the installation. The Chief Management stressed quick installation and activation of the transmitter. It is significant that the Wroclaw broadcasting station was the first to be supplied with modern broadcasting equipment of high power and range during a time when other broadcasting stations, including the Warsaw station, remained far behind in such facilities. The reasons for this were as follows:
 - a. After Szczecin, the Wroclaw broadcasting station was located farther west than any other Polish station.
 - b. The Wroclaw radio station, located in Zorawin, had a 142-meter transmitting antenna of high technical value. It was built entirely of wood, and had not been damaged during the war. Szczecin did not have these technical facilities.
9. The regime's goal was to have its radio propaganda heard as far west as possible; therefore, Wroclaw was selected. The fact that Bierut, together with other members of the administration, arrived in Wroclaw in October 1948 to attend the dedication ceremony of the radio station, is an indication of the great importance attached to the new radio station by the regime. It was here that Bierut gave his well-known speech in which he predicted "a great cultural offensive to be started by the administration."

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10. Early broadcasts showed that the Wroclaw radio station, with its new 50-kilowatt transmitter, possessed sufficient range to cover all of Europe. Surveys, conducted by the Polish Radio, confirmed the fact that the Wroclaw station was heard clearly in all of Western Europe. In addition, the Polish Radio received letters proving that the Wroclaw radio station was being heard in Turkey, Palestine, Egypt, North America, and even Australia. Of course, in the last-mentioned countries, the Wroclaw broadcasts could be heard only under exceptionally favorable conditions and with very powerful sets.
11. The equipment of the Wroclaw broadcasting station is among the most modern in Poland. Partially salvaged amplifier equipment was, to a large degree, repaired and re-activated in the period from 1946 to 1950. Progress was very slow because of shortages of materials and experts. Most of the work was done by the technical division's own staff under the supervision of Engineer Rafara.
12. In 1946, the Wroclaw broadcasting station had in operation one amplifying studio, one studio for forums, one studio for chamber music and piano recitals, and one studio for individual lectures. By the end of 1950, the radio station had two amplifying studios (the second studio was used as a stand-by studio in case the first was damaged); two studios for forums; one chamber music studio, one lecture studio, one large concert studio (converted from a public hall, 15 x 15 meters, with a seating capacity of 500, and having Poland's best concert organs comprising nearly 4,000 pipes), and one control room made up of three sections in which special sound effects are produced.
13. Programs of the Warsaw broadcasting station are transmitted to Wroclaw by special modulation cables leased on a permanent basis by the Polish Radio from the Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs. The Wroclaw station is connected with the Warsaw station by means of two pairs of cables, one pair being for stand-by purposes. These cables up to now have not functioned as expected. Interruptions in the programs have been frequent because of technical difficulties. The cables follow a round-about route via Poznan. In 1950, the Polish Radio asked the Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs for permission to construct special modulation cables from Wroclaw to Warsaw over the shortest route. This investment is anticipated in the Six-Year Plan. The present modulation cables from the amplifying room of the radio station are connected with the telephone wires of the Urzad Pocztowy (Post Office), Krasinskiego Street, Wroclaw, where they are amplified and relayed to Warsaw via telephone cables.
14. The Wroclaw broadcasting station has one GMC truck equipped with technical radio apparatus for mobile broadcasting and recording from the field. This truck was allotted in 1948 by the Chief Management of the Polish Radio in Warsaw. The outfitting of the truck with broadcasting equipment by the technical division of the Wroclaw broadcasting station was done in six months. The truck is equipped with two magnetophones for magnetic tape recordings, amplifiers and microphones for direct broadcasting by means of telephone cables, and two 20-watt dynamic loudspeakers installed on the roof. The truck is used for the dissemination of the regime's propaganda in cities and towns, on occasions like May Day, anniversaries of the Bolshevik revolution, etc.
15. At least 90 percent of the news broadcasts from the field are transcribed from magnetic tape recordings. "Live" broadcasts are transmitted only in rare and exceptional cases.

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16. Recordings are made as follows: The program and technical crew, composed of one or two announcers and radio technicians, arrives at the scene with the broadcasting truck. The news is recorded on the magnetophone. More tape is always used than required for the broadcast; for example, for a 15-minute broadcast a 30-to-40-minute tape is made, and on especially important events, a 60-to-90-minute tape run is made. For broadcast purposes, only the parts needed for propaganda purposes are retained; the rest is either deleted or cut out.
17. The Polish Radio has great difficulty in purchasing magnetophones and tapes. None of the Satellites produces this equipment. After the former German supplies in Wroclaw were exhausted, the Polish Radio was forced to purchase these commodities in the West. At the beginning of 1950, a business deal with West Germany fell through. If it had been successful, all broadcasting stations in Poland were to have been equipped with new magnetophones. Thereupon, in the summer of 1950, the Central Office of Polish Radio in Warsaw issued special orders to all the managements to exercise great care in the use of tapes and magnetophones, since Poland was forced to purchase tapes abroad and pay with dollar bills-of-exchange. Tapes produced in East Berlin were found to be of such poor quality that they had to be withdrawn from use. Magnetophonic tapes and equipment are one of the weakest points in radio broadcasting in Poland; magnetophones are constantly overloaded, and much tape is necessarily wasted. If the Polish Radio is not able to obtain new sources of supply abroad for the purchase of this equipment, serious disturbances in its radio activities may be expected in the very near future.

Control of the Polish radio by the Communist Party (PZPR, Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza, United Polish Workers' Party)

18. From the very beginning of its postwar existence, the Polish Radio felt the strong influence of the Communist Party. By early 1949, the Polish Radio was solely an instrument of Party propaganda. All key positions were filled with proven and trusted Party members. Currently, only young Party members are being appointed to managerial positions. For example, Jan Pierzchala, born in 1920, originally from Gorny Slask, was appointed regional director in Wroclaw in the spring of 1950. In 1950, Andrzej Walalek, born in 1928, was appointed manager of the political information section.
19. PZPR's control is not confined to the appointment of trusted people to key positions. The Party systematically investigates Polish Radio activities. The activities of the Wroclaw radio station are checked by the WK of the PZPR. Other regional radio stations are checked by the WK's of the respective areas, with the exception of the Warsaw broadcasting station, which is controlled by the KC (Komitet Centralny, Central Committee) of the PZPR. A special radio section within the WK has been set up for the exclusive purpose of radio supervision. Orzech, a "radio instructor", has charge of the radio section of the WK in Wroclaw. This section is subordinate to the Propaganda Division of the WK. Each month, the WK holds a conference at which the Party presents the broadcasting plan for the following month. These conferences are attended by the regional director, the personnel manager, and managers of program sections of the Polish Radio, and the secretary of the POP (Podstawowa Organizacja Partyjna, Basic Party Cell). Not only the program and propaganda matters, but also the personnel, organization, and technical matters are discussed. The function of the managerial organs of the Polish Radio at these conferences is limited to the presentation of reports for the past month, and the presentation of constructive suggestions for future plans. The fundamental activity of the managerial organs of the Polish Radio is concerned with the zealous fulfillment of Party directives. Errors in fulfilling the Party directives are punished ruthlessly, and more important offences incur discharge or transfer.

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20. The PZPR exerts the primary influence on the creation of the radio program. The PZPR is most interested in propaganda broadcasts such as news broadcasts of trials, peace congresses, etc. Every important news broadcast of this type is recorded on tape and is edited by the WK representative. For especially important news broadcasts, the Polish Radio sends specialists from Warsaw. For example, in the winter of 1949-50 during the "spy" trial staged in the Wroclaw French consulate, a special broadcasting truck arrived from Warsaw, even though the broadcasting truck of the Wroclaw station was not in use at that time.
21. Party control is not limited to political and propaganda broadcasts. In musical programs it was found that too little Russian music was included. In the spring and summer of 1950, Jan Ocwieja, a non-Party director of the Wroclaw radio choir, and Tadeusz Seredynski, a non-Party director of the Wroclaw radio orchestra, were criticized for not selecting the proper repertoire, not placing proper emphasis on Soviet music and songs, and accepting "suspected reactionary elements" into their group. The trial lasted for two or three months, and was held by the executive committee of the POP.
22. Many disputes arose between the Chief Management of the Polish Radio in Warsaw and the WK of the PZPR in Wroclaw. All disputes resulted from differences of interpretation on some of the regulations of the KC (Central Committee) of the PZPR relative to radio propaganda. Disputes, as a rule, were settled by the KC. In the period from 1947 to 1949, the disputes were usually settled in favor of the Polish Radio, but in the period from 1949 to 1950, the decisions were in favor of the Party. As a result of WK's intervention, the Chief Management instituted important purges and "reorganizations" of the Wroclaw broadcasting station.

General reorganization of the Polish Radio in the spring of 1950, and the creation of two independent enterprises: PP Polskie Radio (Panstwowe Przedsiębiorstwo Polskie Radio, Polish Radio State Enterprise), and PPRK (Panstwowe Przedsiębiorstwo Radiofonizacji Kraju, State Enterprise for Radiofication of Poland).

23. The rapid expansion of radiofication during 1948 and 1949 required a major reorganization in the PP Polskie Radio to place radiofication on an equal footing. In 1949, the Sejm passed a law on the basis of which the CUR (Centralny Urząd Radiofonii, Central Board of Radio Broadcast) was created on 1 January 1950. CUR's headquarters are in Warsaw and it is directly under the jurisdiction of the Presidium of the Council of Ministers. The two new independent enterprises, the PP Polskie Radio and the PPRK, were placed under the jurisdiction of the CUR. Because of the close organizational, economic, and financial ties, the new enterprises could not immediately function independently. Between 1 January 1950 and 31 March 1950, the functions of the two enterprises were gradually divided. The property and real estate of the former Polish Radio enterprise were apportioned as follows:
 - a. The PP Polskie Radio received all real estate (buildings and land) with technical radio broadcasting equipment.
 - b. Automotive vehicles were apportioned between the PP Polskie Radio and the PPRK, the PP Polskie Radio receiving about one-third, and the PPRK, two-thirds. Almost all vehicles with technical broadcasting equipment and passenger cars were given to the PP Polskie Radio. The PP Polskie Radio in Wroclaw received one Skoda Tudor passenger car, one GMC broadcasting truck, and one Dodge station wagon (almost unusable); PPRK received three GMC 3-ton trucks, one Chevrolet 1-1/2-ton truck, one Zis truck (old model), and one Dodge station wagon.

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c. PPRK offices may be installed in PP Polskie Radio broadcasting stations with excess office space, on payment of rent by the PPRK to the PP Polskie Radio for the use of such space.

Organizational status of the PP Polskie Radio as of the end of 1950

24. The Chief Management of the PP Polskie Radio is highly departmentalized for maximum centralization of all radio activities in Poland. The Program Department is the most highly developed and has the following sections:
- a. Political information
 - b. Literary and scientific
 - c. Propaganda
 - d. Foreign (includes monitoring of broadcasts from western Europe and America).
 - e. Sports
 - f. Educational and children's broadcasts
 - g. Program fulfillment control
 - h. Music
 - i. Regional broadcasting stations

The Technical Department has the following sections:

- a. Technical operation of broadcasting stations
- b. Technical operation of radio transmitting stations
- c. Technical investments

The Administrative Department is the least developed with the following sections:

- a. Housekeeping and maintenance
- b. Real estate management
- c. Inventory records and statistics
- d. Communications and guard service

The following so-called independent offices and divisions are under the direct jurisdiction of the Chief Management:

- a. Personnel bureau
- b. Central bookkeeping office
- c. Transportation Division
- d. Coordination and Planning Division
- e. Supply Division
- f. Internal Auditing Division

Each department has its own Budget Control Section to see that expenditures do not exceed the budget.